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Nov 8 1958

SUBJECT: (U) Priority of WS 117L Program for Early Warning

TO: Chief of Staff, USAF
Headquarters USAF
Washington 25, D.C.

1. A status report by the AFBMD to the 21 October 1958 WS 117L Weapon System Phasing Group revealed a serious program deficiency. The infrared effort was found to exist on a minimum sustaining basis with possible program termination by 15 December 1958. Since this program offers the greatest single potential for warning, extraordinary means to preserve it are considered justified. (S)

2. This command has indorsed the military exploitation of space and recognizes the contribution of the biomedical program now a part of the WS 117L development effort. However, an earlier, more significant, military contribution may be realized by adjustment of priorities to emphasize the warning need. The warning capability should be supported with priority over the biomedical. All WS 117L sensors now being developed should enjoy equal priority since they are mutually supporting in the warning role. However, on a last resort basis, with provision that reliability and availability are positively established, the infrared program should be afforded priority over all others. (S)

3. This correspondence classified Secret to protect information regarding future missile programs. (U)

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